"(b) Thirteen wells under the Comprehensive Rural Water-supply Scheme and two under the Harijan Welfare Scheme.

"(c) & (d) A well is proposed to be dug in Manickappangu village. There is no proposal to dig new wells in Kedangal village, but it is proposed to repair the old well in the Harijan Cheri of the village."

SRI S. RAMALINGAM :—"The Government have programmed to dig 71 wells in the Tanjore district. Now the official year is coming to an end. May I know from the Hon. the Minister why only 15 wells have been dug and why no action has been taken about the rest so far?"

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY :—"To avoid delay in the execution of well works, additional technical staff has now been provided. The power of the Collectors to sanction estimates has been raised to Rs. 20,000 and the Board can sanction estimates above Rs. 20,000 without limit."

Pepper plantation

* 1187 *Q.*—SRI M. NARAYANAN NAMBIAR : Will the Hon. the Minister for Agriculture be pleased to state—

(a) the extent of pepper plantation in the State in the current year; and

(b) the annual yield expected?

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM :—"(a) The extent of pepper plantation in the Madras State during the current year, viz., 1954–55 is 119,350 acres.

"(b) The yield expected this year is 9,200 tons as against a normal annual yield of 7,920."

SRI T. C. NARAYANAN NAMBIAR :—"May I know whether the Government have any scheme to give any scientific aid for the growth of pepper and if so, what it is?"

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM :—"A Central Pepper Research Station has already been established at Panniyur near Taliparamba."

SRI T. C. NARAYANAN NAMBIAR :—"Due to the abnormal fall in the price of pepper, the plantations have been affected very adversely. Even the nurseries necessary for these pepper plantations have not functioned for want of finances. Will the Government see that proper help is given to this industry if and when requests come to the Government for such help?"

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM :—"If any specific proposal is made the Government will examine it."

SRI S. PANCHAKSHARAM :—"Is it true that the Agricultural Department has conducted experiments for the growing of pepper in dry districts like North Arcot and Salem and if so, may I know how far the experiments have been successful?"

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM :—" The Agricultural Department has not so far conducted any such experiment. But it has been noticed that at the foot of the Kodaikanal hills, there is a private enterprise thriving and pepper is said to be grown by spraying water in the place of rainfall which is said to be necessary for pepper groves."

SRI M. NARAYANA KURUP :—" The Hon. the Minister said that at Payyanoor a research station has been opened. May I know what is the result of the research so far conducted there and what help has been rendered to the growers of pepper as a result of such research? "

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM :—" It is not Payyanoor but Panniyur. The research station attends to the following items of work :—(1) Evolution of higher yielding types of pepper, (2) control of insect pests and diseases, (3) gathering data regarding the manurial requirements of the crop and (4) improvements of the method of cultivation. I may also tell the hon. Member that this year, the yield per acre is expected to be higher than what it was in the previous year."

9·20 a.m. SRI S. C. C. ANTHONY PILLAI :—" According to the statement given by the Hon. Minister, there is likely to be an increased yield of 20 to 35 per cent. In view of the already falling prices, will the Government take steps to see that prices do not fall abnormally? "

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM :—" I did not say specifically that the increase will be 20 to 35 per cent. Regarding the fall in prices, the other day I explained to the House the steps that are being taken by this Government to arrest the fall in prices in co-operation with the Government of India. One important step that is taken is to reduce the export duty and that should help considerably in checking the steep fall in prices."

SRI S. DAIVASIGAMONEY :—" Does the Hon. Minister know that the price of pepper today is by far greater than what it was three or four years back and may I know whether the pepper that is produced in the State is sufficient for local consumption and if so, what amount of pepper is being exported outside the State? "

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM :—" Sir, there has been a general fall in the price of pepper and that affects the growers of pepper. There is still surplus pepper that could be exported and that is one method of improving our trade with other countries and therefore Government are interested in encouraging export of pepper."

SRI M. NARAYANA KURUP :—" In order to regulate the trade and also to help the growers of pepper, will the Government consider the desirability of applying the Commercial Crops Marketing Act to pepper? "

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THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM :—" Certain disputes relating to Commercial Crops Marketing Act are now pending before the Supreme Court. Government would defer any such extension of the Act to pepper till the decision of the Supreme Court is known on certain provisions of the Act."

Amount of surcharge on stamp duty payable to Chettipalayam Panchayat

* 1188 *Q.*—SRI R. KUPPUSWAMY : Will the Hon. the Minister for Local Administration be pleased to state with reference to the answer given to clause (*b*) of question No. 126 on 13th March 1954, the present stage of investigation by the Accountant-General, Madras, of the matter?

THE HON. SRI S. S. RAMASAMY PADAYACHI :—" The Accountant-General, Madras, requested the Treasury Officer, Coimbatore, on 10th February 1955 to furnish a certificate of non-payment of the arrears amount of surcharge on stamp duty payable to the Chettipalayam Panchayat for the quarters ending 30th June and 30th September 1947, a revised clearance register as on 1st April 1949 and certain other particulars in this regard. Action will be taken by him to authorize payment on receipt of the particulars from the Treasury Officer. The Accountant-General and the Treasury Officer, Coimbatore, have been requested to take action for the expeditious adjustment of the amount in question."

SRI R. KUPPUSWAMY :—" ஒருவருஷமாக பரிசீலனை செய்வதாக இருக்கிறது. என் இவ்வளவு கால தாமதம் என்பதை கனம் மந்திரி அவர்கள் அறிவிப்பார்களா ?"

THE HON. SRI S. S. RAMASAMY PADAYACHI :—" ஏதோ ஒரு ரசீது தவறிவிட்டதனுல் அதைத் தேடுவதற்கு இவ்வளவு கால தாமதம் ஏற்பட்டிருக்கிறது. இப்பொழுது அதைக கண்டுபிடித்து விட்டார்கள். இனிமேல் அதை உடனடியாக செய்து முடித்து விடுவார்கள்."

MR. SPEAKER :—" Questions over. We will take up the next item on the agenda, viz., Demand IV—Forests."

[*Note.*—**An asterisk (*) at the commencement of a speech indicates revision by the Member.**]

II.—VOTING ON DEMANDS FOR GRANTS FOR THE YEAR 1955-56—*co*

(1) DEMAND IV—FOREST DEPARTMENT.

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM :—" Sir, on the recommendation of the Governor, I move—

'*That the Government be granted a sum not exceeding Rs.* 67,62,300 *under Demand IV—Forest Department.*' "

MR. SPEAKER :—" Motion moved—

'That the Government be granted a sum not exceeding Rs. 67,62,300 under Demand IV—Forest Department.'